The first and second melting point ranges are different. A portion of the sew-on tag 36 is located in the mounting opening 34 of the profile component 12. The profile component 12 and the sew-on tag 36 are subjected to thermal action so that one of the plastic materials remains substantially stable, while the other of the plastic materials penetrates recesses 38 in the one of the plastic materials. The plastic materials of the profile component 12 and the sew-on tag 36 are cooled such that the other plastic material solidifies in the recesses to bond the profile component 12 and the sew-on tag 36.

By performing the method in this manner, particularly by heating plastic material parts with different melting point ranges, the fixing piece can be formed rapidly and at low cost in an environmentally friendly way. No application of an adhesive is needed. Additionally, a very strong bond is formed between the profile and the sew-on tag. The claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited patents by this heating of the claimed plastic profile component and plastic sew-on tag with different melting point ranges such that one penetrates recesses in the other to bond same upon cooling.

Claims 5-6 and 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,511,562 to Coffield in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,478,382 to Schulte. The Coffield patent is cited for a profile 14, 16 with an opening 22, 24 and a tag 18 made separately from the profile. The profile and the tag are alleged to be made of two plastic materials (the Hytrel or PVC of strip halves 14 and 16 and the urethane adhesive) with different melting point ranges. The profile is allegedly located in the opening and is allegedly subjected to thermal action by the curing of adhesive 20 so that one of the plastic materials remains substantially stable while the other material 20 penetrates recesses in the stable plastic material followed by cooling. The

Schulte patent is cited for the use of a sew-on tag, with the allegation that making the Coffield tag a sew-on tag would be obvious. Relative to claim 6, the Coffield patent is relied upon for first material that is extrudable and a tag of non-woven material. Relative to claim 8, the Coffield profile is again relied upon as being extruded, with the mounting of the tag in the opening being immediately after extrusion, as allegedly shown in Coffield Fig. 2. Relative to claims 9 and 10, Coffield column 6, lines 3-4, is cited for an adhesive having a melting point range greater than a first melting point range.

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over the Coffield and Schulte patents, when further considered in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,197,342 to Bethe. The Bethe patent is cited for the use of particular materials.

The Office Action is apparently relying on the fact that the Coffield adhesive 20 is disclosed to be a hot melt adhesive so as to involve some thermal action. However, the claims require thermal action on the profile component and sew-on tag such that a first one remains stable while the other penetrates recesses in the first one. The Coffield adhesive 20 is neither part of the Coffield strips 14 and 16 alleged to correspond to the claimed profile component nor the Coffield fabric 18 alleged to correspond to the claimed tag. Since the adhesive 20 is not part of either the strip halves 14 and 16 or the fabric 18, the action of that adhesive does not satisfy the claimed method steps that only involve the profile component and the sew-on tag, without reciting the use of an adhesive. The Coffield patent does <u>not</u> disclose heating a profile component with a sew-on tag therein, as claimed since only adhesive 20 is heated.

The claims also require different melting temperature ranges of the profile and the tag. In contrast, the Office Action only compares the material of the Coffield halves 14 and 16 with the adhesive, and not with the fabric.

The Schulte patent is not cited for and does not cure this deficiency in the Coffield patent.

Accordingly, claim 5 is patentably distinguishable over the cited patents.

Claims 6-10, being dependent upon claim 5, are also allowable for the above reasons. Moreover, these dependent claims recite additional features further distinguishing them over the cited patents.

Claim 6 is further distinguishable by the first plastic material being extrudable, and the sew-on tag 36 being a non-woven material, a formed fabric or an open-pore woven material, within the overall claimed combination.

Claim 7 is further distinguishable by the plastic material being a soft polyvinyl chloride material or a polypropylene block material, and that the second plastic material being a polyester non-woven material. The Bethe patent, in relating to a foaming process, is not analogous to and is not properly combinable with the adhesive bonding of the Coffield patent.

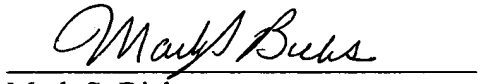
Claim 8 is further distinguishable by the profile component 12 being extruded, by the sew-on tag 36 being bonded to the profile component 12 by being mounted in the mounting opening 34 immediately after extrusion of the profile component or simultaneously with extrusion of the profile component 12, and by the wall components 40 of the profile component 12 adjoining the mounting opening 34 and a portion of the sew-on tag 36 in the mounting opening 34 being pressed together to penetrate the other plastic material into the recesses 38. Although Fig. 2 of the Coffield patent is cited for these features, the Coffield fabric is not

disclosed to be and cannot be placed between halves 14 and 16 immediately after or simultaneously with extrusion, since the halves must be fully formed to receive adhesive 20 in bonding grooves 26. Particularly, Coffield Fig. 2 does not show any relationship of strip halves 14 and 16 and fabric 18 relative to extrusion of those strip halves.

Claims 9 and 10 are further distinguishable by the second melting point range being greater than the first melting point range. The adhesive 20 does not comprise the plastic of the Coffield halves 14 and 16 or its fabric 18, and thus, cannot teach this feature.

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in condition for condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable action toward that end is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: April 22, 2009